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WDVA Business Work-Out Update

Many of the creative solutions identified by the teams in the April 22, 2004 Work-out have come to fruition:

✓ Central Office now has two consistent mail openers; Donna Johnson and Chris Moncrief.

✓ The Purchasing Guide has been developed and training has been held at all locations. In addition, it is now available either in hard copy or via the V-NET.

✓ Brenda Halbert and Regina Kilby have been added as backup signers for petty cash.

✓ The ADL manual is now on the V-NET along with Frequently Asked Questions.

✓ Training was held for the ADL Windows version of MDS and Care Planning on July 22nd.

✓ The agency is now piloting the Office of Financial Management's Travel Voucher System. Training was held on July 22nd.

Stay tuned for more Work-Out updates.

State VA Service Officers Accredited by VFW and American Legion



(L to R) Ed Rasmussen, VFW State Chairman Vets Services Committee; John Lee; Barb Logan; Alex Deluao; Steven Gill; Frosty Hulsey, VFW State Commander; Andrew Clark; and Stephen Stetson, VFW State Surgeon.

Service to Veterans enhanced by partnership

Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Service Officers have again raised the bar for providing quality service to our state's veterans.

On June 25, leaders from the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) presented four staff members with accreditation certificates from the National VFW.

Frosty Hulsey, VFW State Commander; Ed Rasmussen, VFW State Chairman of the Veterans Services Committee, and Stephen Stetson, VFW State Surgeon, traveled to Olympia to personally present the certificates to Alex Deluao, Barbara Logan, Andrew Clark and Steven Gill. The American Legion also extended accreditation to these staff service officers.

Accreditation from the VFW and American Legion will allow WDVA employees to quickly

access claims information through the Benefits Delivery Network held by these Veteran Service Organizations (VSOs). This will allow WDVA to submit claims for long-term care Medicaid clients residing in private nursing facilities throughout the state as part of the WDVA/DSHS Medicaid project.

In addition, the VFW and American Legion can refer veterans to the WDVA Olympia Service Center, while retaining their Power of Attorney.

"This partnership will expand the capacities of all parties, and ensure our veteran client base receives the highest level of quality claims services available, in a seamless fashion," said Jim Rising WDVA Program Manager.

To contact a WDVA Service Officer, call: 1-800-562-2308 or 1-877-249-0516.

GUEST COLUMN



Strategic Planning Update

By Dariush Khaleghi, Strategic Plan & IS Mgr

Let me begin by thanking everyone who is making a difference in the lives our veterans. I am personally humbled by the level of

commitment and dedication the staff members of this agency share and show.

As reported in the May issue of @WDVA, we submitted the first phase of our strategic plan to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) on May 1. The next step is to submit the measures and results we will use to evaluate our performance. These are due to OFM on August 1 and will be posted on the agency's V-NET. Many of you have pitched in and helped to put this work together and I want

to take this opportunity to thank you!

As each of us prepares our performance plans - or EDPP's - the strategic plan will serve as our guide. Remember that each of our individual roles and responsibilities tie into the agency-wide strategic plan. By achieving our personal goals we are helping the agency succeed and meet the overall objectives outlined in the strategic plan. Thank you and please feel free to contact me with your thoughts and ideas.



E-Mail Server Changeover

On July 10, all of WDVA's e-mail accounts were moved to the Department of Information Systems (DIS) server. This is the first phase in the transfer of all e-mail services to DIS. The transfer will be complete by the end of August. Completion of the transfer will be good news for anyone receiving unwanted e-mail "Spam" messages as Spam filtering software will block these messages. In addition a virus scanning software upgrade will prevent against attacks on our computer systems. One of many great benefits of this transfer is that users will be able to access their e-mail accounts from the internet.

Thanks goes to Bob Murphy and the rest of WDVA's IS staff members for their commitment to "Serving Those Who Served" and to DIS for working closely with us throughout the project.

TIP: Manage your mailbox size with Mailbox Cleanup

IS recommends that you have no more than 150 Megabytes in your mailbox.

On the Tools menu, click Mailbox Cleanup.

Do any of the following:

- View the total size of your mailbox and of individual folders within it.
- Find items that are larger than a certain KB size.
- Find items older than a certain date.
- Archive items using AutoArchive.
- View the size of your Deleted Items folder.
- Empty your Deleted Items folder.



WDVA Salutes Our Recreation Therapy Teams

National Therapeutic Recreation Week was celebrated July 11-17, 2004, throughout the country.



Standing: Kari Arthur, Lynn Zemke and Shannah Rongen.
Seated: Kathleen Weibe & Ileen Gallagher.

What is National Therapeutic Recreation Week?

National Therapeutic Recreation Week is an annual observance that promotes awareness of the benefits of therapeutic recreation programs and services. During this weeklong celebration, organizers spotlight and encourage recreational activities involving people with mental illnesses and people with disabilities.

What is the history of National Therapeutic Recreation Week?

The National Therapeutic Recreation Society (NTRS), a membership organization for people interested in providing therapeutic recreation services, established National Therapeutic Recreation Week in 1984. Since

then, the observance has been celebrated during the second week of July.

What qualifies as therapeutic recreation?

Recreational therapy as "a variety of techniques, including the use of arts and crafts, animals, sports, games, dance and movement, drama, music, and community outings, that are used to treat and maintain the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of clients." Essentially, therapeutic recreation, or recreational therapy, is any organized activity undertaken for the purpose of mental and/or physical rehabilitation or benefit.



Back row: Bill Shea, Tami Reuter, Catherine Shaw.
Front row: Gary Earl, Elaine Martin, Carol Denton & Mary Tyson.

What are the benefits of therapeutic recreation?

Research has found that therapeutic recreation affects social and motor skills as well as intellectual abilities in people with mental illnesses or disabilities. Those who participate in therapeutic

recreation improve in social interaction, play and recreation, and vocational abilities.

Who runs the WDVA Therapeutic Recreation programs?

Staff members at the Soldiers Home and Colony include:

- Lynn Zemke, Program Mgr
- Ileen Gallagher, RS 3
- Shannah Rongen, RS 3
- Kathleen Weibe, RS1
- Kari Arthur, RS1

At the Veterans Home in Retsil it's:

- Catherine Shaw, Program Mgr
- Bill Shea, RS 3
- Tami Reuter, RS 3
- Gary Earl, RS 2

- Carol Denton, RA

- Mary Tyson, RA

- Elaine Martin, RA

At the Spokane Veterans Home you'll find:

- Shane Price, Program Mgr
- Kathy Phillips, RS 2
- Catherine Schnell, RA
- Candice Belcourt, RA (currently on Ed Leave)
- Rhonda Campbell, RA

All providing exceptional therapeutic programs, seven days a week, for home residents.



(L to R) Kathy Phillip, Shane Price and Catherine Schnell.

@ VET SERVICE CENTERS

Central Office and Vet Services Hold Staff Recognition Event



Alex Deluao, VBS2 receives the Director's Award.



Debbie Kettlehut, Admin. Assist. receives the Director's Award.



John Lee, Deputy Director receives the Director's Award.

On June 25, staff from the Central Office and Veteran Services division held their annual recognition event at the Tumwater Historical Park. MC for the program was this year's recognition committees chairman Terri Goddard.

Following much laughter and camaraderie of games, contests and a great potluck lunch, John Lee presented the Years of Service pins and certificates to the employees reaching 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service, with Human Resource Manager Evelyn Harris receiving her 30-year pin.

The 2004 Distinguished Service Awards were presented to:

- Cyndee Baugh, Executive Assistant to the Director
- Ben Pineda, VBS VEMP Mgr
- Steve Cline, Support Services Counselor - Seattle
- Brenda Halbert, Medical Billing
- Bob Murphy, Information Services
- Peggy Challman, Payroll Supervisor

The group was then honored with a special appearance by LT Governor Brad Owen, who arrived to present the Public Employee Recognition Extra Mile Award to the IS Team of Bob Murphy, Jeff Kiper, Dale Cain and Gordon Smith, on behalf of the State of Washington. This special award – open to all state employees – was presented statewide to only 14 individuals and teams, of which WDVA received two – the IS team and Retsil's Mark Jones.

The afternoon concluded with Director John King presenting Director's Awards to Debbie Kettlehut, Admin. Assistant; Alex Deluao, VBS 2; and John Lee, Deputy Director. All were recognized for their past year's performance as consummate professionals, team players and incredible assets to the agency.



Brenda Halbert, Medical Billing Tech. receives the Distinguished Service Award.



Steve Cline, Support Services Counselor (King Co.) receives the Distinguished Service Award.



Ben Pineda, VEMP Mgr. receives the Distinguished Service Award.



Bob Murphy, Server Administrator receives the Distinguished Service Award.



Cyndee Baugh, Exc. Asst. receives the Distinguished Service Award.

s and CENTRAL OFFICE...



LT Governor Brad Owen (center), presents the Public Employee Recognition Extra Mile Award to the IS Team of (L to R) Jeff Kiper, Gordon Smith, Bob Murphy, and Dale Cain (not present) on behalf of the State of Washington.

Slusarski is "Making A Difference"



Willie Slusarski (R) accepts his award from Frank Idzikowski (center), and Frank Pierce of the VA Regional Office.

At a Seattle VA Regional Office awards ceremony, on June 4, 2004, Willie Slusarski, a WDVA Veterans Benefits Specialist II working in the WDVA Seattle Veterans Service Office, received the federal VA's "Making A Difference" Award. This Award is normally

presented to Federal VA employees who are recognized as having "gone the extra mile" to make a positive difference in the lives of veterans and their families.

The "Making A Difference" Award was presented to Willie because of his efforts to assist a veteran who had been struggling unsuccessfully for several years to get an extremely complex disability claim granted by the VA.

Willie's assistance resulted in an appropriate increase of the veteran's rating to 100%, retroactive benefits going back 10 years, and educational benefits for the veteran's wife and children. In gratitude for this tireless assistance on his behalf, the veteran wrote a letter to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Anthony Principi, stating his complete satisfaction with the VA Rating Decision, and especially his appreciation of Willie's professional assistance as a Service Officer. WDVA is proud of this recognition afforded to one of our own, Mr. Willie Slusarski.

WDVA Receives \$300,000 Grant Emphasis on helping homeless veterans get and retain jobs

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) has received notice from the federal Department of Labor – Veterans Employment and Training Services (USDOL) – that a \$300,000 annual grant extension for the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Project (HVRP) has been approved beginning July 1, 2004.

The services provided under this program are directed toward increasing the employability of homeless veterans through training or arranging for the provisions of services which will enable them to work, matching homeless veterans with potential employers and creating linkages to appropriate services.

HVRP grant funds are awarded competitively and reviewed annually to ensure goals agreed upon by the grantee and USDOL are met.

"WDVA's ability to recognize the complex problems that face homeless veterans has contributed greatly to forming the partnerships and coordination between local, state and federal veterans' services programs needed for the success of the project," said WDVA director John M. King.

"Once again the dedicated and knowledgeable employees at the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs have met our stated goals to help homeless veterans, allowing us to continue these critical programs."

@ ORTING...

Associate Superintendent Selected

David J. DeVore has been selected to serve as Associate Superintendent at the Washington Soldiers Home in Orting, effective July 21, 2004.

He served for 27 years in the U.S. Navy, starting as a Hospital Corpsman with specialty training as a laboratory technician, managing laboratories around the world. His last 12 years of service were spent in Submarine Medicine, with his last assignment aboard the USS Frank Cable, where he managed the delivery of health care to a

crew of 1100 men and women home ported in Guam.

After retiring in July 1998, DeVore spent 2 ½ years in private long term care managing medical records, as well as other aspects of nursing home operations.

Before coming to the Soldiers Home, DeVore was the health care manager for the Washington Correction Center for Women in Gig Harbor, WA., providing health care to more than 900 inmates, as well as the oversight of medical and clerical staff.

DeVore, the son of a Navy veteran, holds a Bachelor of Science degree from George Washington University.



David J. DeVore has been selected to serve as Associate Superintendent at the Washington Soldiers Home

DeVore and his wife Judy have one son, Jacob, who will be attending Olympic Community College this fall.

@ SPOKANE...

Spokane Veterans Home is getting a kitchen!

*By Kathy Magonigle,
Administrator*

Many of you may not be aware, but the Spokane Veterans Home does not have an on-site kitchen. Meals are outsourced from Deaconess Medical Center through a contract with Aramark, and are delivered three times a day in a "bulk" supply to be served to our residents. No food is prepped on site except for simple things, like toast and sandwiches.

When the Home was built in 1987, a "shell" was built for a kitchen but when the Home was owned by Empire Health Services, they felt they could provide that service from an off-

site location and save on expenditures. Thus, this site has never had an operational kitchen.

For the past two years, WDVA has been working with the Fed VA and the WA State Legislature to provide funding for a full service kitchen for the home. In 2003, the home received Federal VA funding to support 65% of the projected cost of the kitchen. In 2004, the Home received the authorization from the legislature to spend the remaining 35% required for the project.

The Spokane firm of ALSC was hired as architects to start the plans for our new kitchen.

The first set of plans were sent to the Federal VA on July 15th, 2004 for approval. If all goes as planned, the project will start sometime in October or November of 2004 and will be completed before the end of the biennium. The new kitchen and expanded dining space will allow more options of food choices, dining times and ability for residents to dine with their family members. This will increase the quality of life for all who live here and will make our environment more home-like. The residents are anxiously awaiting the smells of "home cooking!" Staff are too, as this means they will be able to purchase meals also.

@ RETSIL...

Preparing for “the Big Move”

By Jerry Towne, Superintendent

The new skilled nursing building will be complete and ready for residents to move into, as early as February 2005.

An exciting part of this plan is the opportunity for Light Nursing residents - currently residing in buildings 6/7 - to move into building 10 with new and improved accommodations. In addition, some residents will likely be offered rooms in the new 240 bed Veterans Home on the first floor. As you remember, buildings 6/7 were identified in our 2000 Master Plan as "functionally obsolete" and will therefore be demolished early in



A mock-up room will soon be complete with furniture for residents and staff to view. (Left) Entering a double room. (Right) Hallway of Neighborhood C.



2005. As the transition plan is further developed we will continue working with staff and residents to review suggestions and gather feedback. Our Social Work staff members will begin planning with domiciliary residents to explore the options that best fit their needs.

The historical district plan calls for an interpretive park where buildings 6/7 now exist. This park will open up the view, provide a gathering place for residents and the community, and capture historical

perspectives through a series of kiosks. A conceptual drawing of the park will be developed in the future. Options, such as incorporating the Post Office in its current location, will be considered.

We are very excited about the changes that will take place in the next year. We also understand that it may be a trying time. We will be here to address your concerns and answer your questions.



Outside view of Administration offices.



The view from the new Administration section, looking at the new Dining facility on the left, the Post Office and part of Bldg. 7.

Tips for Communicating with Hearing Instrument Users



How should you communicate with people who have impaired hearing? It is important to answer this question since hearing loss also impacts those wishing to communicate with affected individuals. People often avoid contact with the hearing impaired because they do not know how to react. This is not only unfortunate, but also unnecessary.

These tips are designed to ease communication with hearing impaired individuals and to help you support novice hearing instrument users to benefit fully from this modern technology.

1. Speak clearly and naturally.

It is not necessary to shout. Loud speech may overload the hearing instrument causing voice distortion and even discomfort to the wearer. Maintain a normal tone of voice, speak clearly and slowly.

2. Move closer.

Reducing the distance between the speaker and the listener is helpful and encourages improved speech understanding. This is particularly important if there is background noise.

3. Face the listener.

Position yourself so that the listener can see your face and lips. Lip reading is instinctive to all of us, but it is particularly important to those with impaired hearing to supplement the sound of the speech.

4. Attract the listener's attention.

This can be done by using either the person's name, entering their field of vision, or tapping them lightly on the shoulder.

5. Take the surroundings into account.

Avoid trying to have conversations from one room to another or in rooms with distracting noises, e.g. washing machine, vacuum cleaner, loud music, etc.

6. Be aware of performance constraints.

Never put the hearing impaired listener and their instruments under too much pressure. They both have their limits.

7. Understand that using hearing instruments can be tiring.

When conversing with a novice hearing instrument user be sensitive to signs of fatigue. Don't force or prolong conversations if the listener is tired.

8. Be patient.

Respect the speed of progress and encourage the person with impaired hearing when obvious progress is made. Be a good listener and help the person achieve the goal of participating in life again.

Who's New

Mary Miller, LPN2 Intmt
Gloria Shurland, RN3
Linda Jobe, Int Laundry Wkr 1
Teresa Pershin, Int FSA 1
Joel Berlien, VEMP Mgr
Chris Moncrief, CO Receptionist
Jorge Company, VBA
David DeVore, Assoc. Supt.
Judie Engel, Reg Clinical Dietician
Marv King, VBS

Who's Retired

Nellie Miller, NA2-C



Bill Arthur,
Plant Mgr



Mary Bayha,
Pharm Tech

Who Needs a Hand

Listed below are employees approved for Shared Leave:
Jeanette Chunko
Rochelle Gates
Josefina Bigler
Contact your HR dept. to contribute.

What's New with Washington Works

Collective bargaining began in Feb 2004, with contracts to be in place by July 2005.

What issues are subject to negotiations?

The law defines several subjects that are mandatory for collective bargaining. In addition to negotiating over wages, hours and terms and conditions of employment, the state also will negotiate provisions addressing the number of names to be certified for vacancies, promotional preferences, and the dollar amount expended for employee health care benefits.

Find out more at
www.washingtonworks.wa.gov/collective/faq.htm.